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C O N F I D E N T I A L DHAKA 001907

SIPDIS

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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [KISL](#) [PHUM](#) [BG](#)

SUBJECT: AMBASSADOR VISITS AHMADIYA HEADQUARTERS

REF: A. DHAKA 01853

[1](#)B. 01802

[1](#)1. (C) SUMMARY: Ambassador demonstrated support for Ahmadiya demands for freedom of religion and protection under the law after BDG allegedly permitted attacks against them.

[1](#)2. (U) Following a surge of violence against Ahmadiyas (REFTEL) in Bangladesh, Ambassador on April 22 met with Ahmadiya leaders at their Dhaka headquarters to demonstrate USG support regarding the attacks.

[1](#)3. (C) The leaders alleged that recent attacks have been tacitly sanctioned by a BDG less concerned with individual rights than with appeasing the religious majority. While they conceded that BDG had protected their community, BDG has begun to succumb to demands of extremist religious leaders. BDG leaders state publicly their commitment to protect Ahmadiyas but allegedly call local police immediately prior to demonstrations, instructing police to allow banned demonstrations to go forward.

[1](#)4. (C) Ahmadiyas demand equal protection under the law and freedom of religion, as guaranteed by the Bangladeshi constitution. They want BDG to remove provocative signboards posted on their mosques that were erected by police in Khulna and Bogra. They demand that those responsible for recent attacks be brought to justice.

[1](#)5. (C) Ambassador undertook to relay their grievances to Washington.

[1](#)6. (C) COMMENT: On April 22 media reported that the district administration of Satkhira denies any attacks on Ahmadiyas in that area. This denial may result from public and media pressure to stem the tide of anti-Ahmadiya violence.

CHAMMAS